

The Camera As An Eye

"To construct a poem that is only poetry is impossible
If a piece contains only poetry, it is not constructed,
it is not a poem."

-- P. Valery

I SAW JJ America emerge from the Wasteland, dripping affluent despair; old Possum in his (Faber) lair scrounging for God, his whimper grown weaker, also his rod; Auden age with Anxiety; Anthiel bow to John Cage, the Jazz Age to Rock rage, the Jet Age to dotage; three generations come and go, talking of Paris and Picasso --the LOST with their PAPA and Stein, the BEAT with their POT and whine, the PEPSI con line; e. e. cumming thru the wry, stalking moons with his old school tie; hue and cry of Partisan REVIEW fade in the smog of Trotsky's bog; deluge of MAD Little mags; Dwight's POLITICS fall between Miller's TROPICS and Eisenhower's inertia. Oh, who'll give a shilling for Hook, Howe and Trilling; who'll beat the cymbal for Brooks Burke and Tindall, Holy (GROUP) Mary, wide as a prairie. Ransom, Crow and mini-Taters, the academic alligators who drank the spring of Empson, SHOGun of the 40s, saint of 7 Types, devoured by the old-NEW critics, polluting the stream of Lit with their gripes and ambiguities? So passed the WINTERS of our youth, the Day of the Locust, the great Sahara of the 50s, the Beat tornadoes of the 60s. But styles like seasons change, explicators expire; names and causes of the moment become the ephemera of tomorrow. Who now gives a hoot for the hot pursuit of Amy and DADA, the scratchin' of Patchen, BEFORE the BRAVE, with his retinue of drummers, clowns, ecstatic girls who stormed the bookstall barricades of 4th Avenue for a word from his prolific pen, explaining life and love as it was then? And so the wheel turns, the show goes on; the parts, the characters we play are judged by where it stops and starts. Oh MARILYN, MARILYN, what does it take to win? Shall I kiss the Statue of Liberty, carry a torch for democracy, go underground and marry Miss Subway, admit I'm Sir HAS-been, deny the dream of Sunday in bed with Sophia Loren?

I SAW JJ Lawyer Welch put the squelch on loudmouth McCarthy, the pumpkin papers, HUAC capers erupt in a national HISS, the horsepiss of Communist plots, knockwell patriots, Birch BARKS of minute men; the bitch in the NIGHT-WOOD; the teenage switch from Aragon's RED FRONT to campus snipers and PEACE demonstrations; the pendulum of W. C. Williams' THINGS, and all that swings from Paterson: Miss Marianne Moore, the Brooklyn mirage, still mistaken for Calliope's barge; a toast to E. Bishop, North and South, and to the technique of Bogan and Garrigue. For the Sitwells riding LIFE sidesaddle, green pastures on Olympus. For the bogus queens of yesterday's intrigues, who flirted with immortality and died of Drought -- a geyser for their memory. For the boy scouts of beauty, exile in the

the Farmer's Almanac. For E. Wilson, who opened Pandora's box in Axel's Castle and braved the climate of the Finland Station and dared to walk steel trails with the Iroquois, heap praise upon. For C. Aiken's PUNCH the IMMORTAL LIAR, a clambake brunch with the EMPEROR of ICE CREAM and echoes of Shangri La from Stevens' BLUE GUITAR. Everywhere I looked I found the influence of E. Pound, in Little Mags and universities, midst brokers, shoe clerks and Ph.D.s; his stock soars past 30 CANTOS but not as high as the Alps of Joyce: hated master of the BOTTOM DOGS condemned like Sisyphus to tote their gall stones over the Mountain of Hope and gnaw (with false teeth) the bitter bone of frustration and howl DO THESE BONES LIVE.

I SAW ¶¶ The proles in the Automat who never got to bat; the Yippies throwing darts at Miss LONELY HEARTS; the farce of Peyton Place, no loss in Grace, but oh the loss of face; the Grand Canyon vacuums of J.F.K. and Robert murdered in their prime; the pillage and crime as the muck and mystery went deeper than Dallas as the F. Bee Eye let Ruby blast Oswald gangster-fashion LIVE on TV. Cheers for those who refused to climb the ladder of lies for the Cracker Jack prize: Lowell, his Union Dead protesting the HELL of every war; Jarrell, exposing the swindle of the SAD HEART in the SUPERMARKET by the LARK set; Wilbur, ringing those BEAUTIFUL CHANGES on our drab existence; Snodgrass, toying with the HEART's NEEDLE; Berryman, pursuing Mistress Anne with 77 DREAMSONGS; O'Hara, who would not dance for McNamara and his BRASS band under the spreading NAPALMS; Sy Krim, the NEARSIGHTED CANNONEER who pinpoints the ACTION in pad and gym and the phonies on the rim of the charmed circle. SEE more soon, SEYMORE KRIM!

I SAW ¶¶ The change from SPADE to MAN; the movement to DUMP the HUMP; the John Two Dollar liberals and traders; the dreck of Viereck; the hollow echoes of Hollywood; those who swapped the GRAPES of WRATH for the plums of prestige; those who played FAST and LUCE with their rebel past for a cover on LIFE. Hold dear the Roethkes, conversing with bees, avoiding labels, OLD as NEW; give mandate to Mailer, the nailer of media phonies with their TIMED deadlines and pants-down-prose. Confucius say, roll out the BAN for M. McLuhan, and take it from me, you can't ride a Mechanical BRIDE. Treasure the vision, the skill & precision on both sides of the coin: sensitive D. Schwartz, who found responsibilities in dreams; Bukowski, hard as quartz, haunted by the drunken boat, the worm at beauty's throat, that never sleeps.

I SAW ¶¶ A good year for poets and friends of the friends of friends who rode the White Horse with DYLAN, drunk as a dragon; Brinnin, high on a wagon of anecdotes, a book in his pocket with none THEN to knock it and Todd, who rode the coattails of God, one eye on Oscar, the sparrow, gath-

ering crumbs from Hudson to Barrow, in anthologies began his royalties.

I SAW ¶¶ The herd, all OUT together looking IN: sandal makers, pottery bakers, jewelry fakers, HIP joints, strip joints; WHAMburgers "with a college education;" pizza infiltration; foreign films; Black Muslims; Swedish modern; BOREwhole OPon, Brillo PUTon; the psychedillic nudeON bugging the prudeON with electrical bananas; American antiques; Beatle cliques; Watusi dancers stomping on Stuyvesant's grave; St. Marks-in-the-Bowerie, Judson Players; revivals, denials; Cedar Bar, the springboard of hope and despair for the 10th St. painters; the hard line of Kline the drippins of Pollock, deKooning's WOMEN et al. before they made the uptown parade to La M.O.M.A. or Rosenberg coined ACTION the FASHION in the maze of quaint streets like Charles, Grove and Perry; the Christopher Ferry, cruise line to Hoboken's Clam House OASIS for Tenement Poets and poor men, the midsummer night's dream of affluence riding over the slip-slop miniature waves -- gone like ten-cent beer and FREE lunch, the critical raves for the clip-clop verse of another day when June and Moon turned on Millay and love had no help from LSD. Where have all the flowers gone: Wordsworth's daffodils, Whitman's lilacs, the shy rose of Amherst, the broken drums of the Dharma bums, Fitzgerald's Flappers, the Lindy, the double decked bus -- things that made New York FUN CITY plus?

I SAW ¶¶ The Flower Children taking to the hills and assorted pills to escape the ills of society; the apes, the Burroughs and the pack; the PEACE EYE PENTAGON, Head quarters for the FUCK YOU attack on the cadillac establishment; DAWN Ginsberg's revenge for the FROST on the corn; BLOW the MAN down Orlovsky, making like a yogi; the FUGS and their plugs -- more COCK in the FOLKROCK; the MAMAS and the PAPAS; the mods and the Rockers, teenyboppers, HEADshoppers; the MOTown, the GODown, the BUGdown, the MUGdown, the dykes and the damDOWN; the FREAKouts, the CREEPouts; the gluttons for BUTTONS, mocking every sacred cow; the SOCK IT TO ME NOW crowd; illiterate PROFUNDity of POW; fly with LSD -- syndrome of dreary, weary and LEARY, Lord of Cube Castle, HIGH priest of ACID corroding the COPouts. C.O.D. for the round trip: INNERSPACE to HANGOVER SQUARE. No cubes for INNESFREE. No refunds for insanity!

I SAW ¶¶ The substance and the sum of CORE; the buzz saw of Black Power cutting down Malcome X; the FUZZ in a shower of bricks; sniper debates with Panther soul mates; Joan Baez trying to OVERCOME Wallace-minded racists with LOVE and Martin L. King; the ring of revolt in Northern ghettos and Southern palmettos; the hired, hate-cocked gun that killed the MAN but not the spirit; the happening of Stokely; back lash and pickets in the pokey; Baldwin's warning of the FIRE; the holocaust of WATTS, Newark, and

WASHINGTON; hate and fear waiting their turn to BURN BABY BURN.

I SAW JJ Life put the squeeze on Weldon Kees; Gorky, sad as Gay St. on a rainy night; iron jaw Beckett, waiting for GODOT; the one and only Fiedler not on the roof; D. Gregory's spoof of Mississippi justice; L. Abel, chaffing at his bit in the academic stable, constant runner up for the COMMENTARY cup but never a winner in the National SweepSTEAKS. Each to his track said the hag to the fag, this is the age of the HOWL and the FISH; half the girls are fowl, half the boys are swish. How sad to be GAY in the world of Genet. Kerouac went Zen, Rexroth went West, Ginsberg came East, Todd to Cape Cod, Creeley to Spain, Blackburn to Provence, Olson to Buffalo, Corso to Rome, and Duncan to Elfland, winds of doctrine, waves of influence. Some erect antennas of KULCHUR, build a BLACK MT. complex, clain ORIGIN axis, use a TROBAR to lift the DEEP IMAGE; some play it LOCUS Solus, swear by YUGEN or blow a PLUMED HORN or set up a BIG TABLE feast for a new generation served with WORMWOOD and gall. Shades of Marinetti and Apollinaire, the FUTURISTS, the fruits of TRANSITION with SURREALIST hangovers. HAIR all over the place and on the face; barefoot boys in Mardi Gras costumes; mini-girls making like Macy toys, enjoying the noise of turned on cafes on MacDougal; the man from VENUS without a penis looking for BREAD and the Electric Circus; all sights for suburban invaders elbowing bookie persuaders digging the gold in the Welfare Checks on Shedidan Square where the VOICE calls the faithful to swing with the SCENE; ess-pressos and lessos like Nedicks; OUT chicks in Whalen's; jailins at Greenwich Bastille where narcos, lesbos and Women for Peace get the feel of the LAW; the natives dig bagels and navels on Sullivan St. Pushers with knishes on 4th, pickups and gin at the Figaro, breakfast and bromo at Bigelows, the Princess of blintzes on Carmine, Danish at Sutters, winos in gutters on 3rd, Mrs. Plushbottom curbing the turd on 5th next door to the wierdos and beardos in Washington Square where reality meets the twilight zone and only the poets change making it all NEW again; the Rolling Stone from Denver meets Howard Johnson on 6th, but not L.B.J. on his way to La Dolce Vita.

I SAW JJ The AD -- Ten Easy Lessons, write out your repressions; before the Beat there was BOHEMIA, and before the Scene there was the VILLAGE. How many DOORS lead to fame; how many lead to failure? Simpson praises Mr. Bly-- Sorrentino swats him like a fly; even Rimbaud found gun running was easier. Rage, rage AGAINST the buying of the LIGHT. The phonies, the trivia, the CAMP, the cocktail party mask, the politics of POETRY, the petty and the pity all dissolve in the REALITY of St. Vincent's EMERGENCY.